

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the very thorough consideration given the present application.

Claims 1-22 are now present in this application. Claims 1 and 11 are independent. Claims 1 and 11 have been amended.

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Drawings

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that the drawings filed on September 14, 2004 have been accepted.

Explanation of Invention

As the Examiner will note, the Applicants have amended independent claims 1 and 11 to provide additional clarity to the combinations of claim features to which the Applicants' arguments are directed. Neither the claim amendments nor the explanation provided herein is intended to limit the scope of the Applicants' claimed invention in any way.

It is the Applicants' view that additional explanation will be helpful in that the Office Action indicates that the Applicants and the Examiner are not on the

same page with regard to the particular combinations of features to which the Applicants' arguments are directed.

In this regard, the Applicants first submit that the Applicants' claims set forth various distinct combinations. For example, the Applicants' claims set forth a combination of features wherein certain characteristics are defined, and also wherein certain profiles are defined. In addition, the Applicants' claims set forth combinations wherein each characteristic has specific values assigned to it. The specific values are assigned to the characteristic by at least one profile.

For example, table 300 in Fig. 3 lists characteristics such as "card failure", "card missing" and "card mismatch". Similarly, table 500 in Fig. 5 lists characteristics such as "access privilege", "account type", "quality and service" and "access port". These are characteristics which have been defined, e.g. "defining one or more characteristics" as recited in claim 1.

Claim 1 also sets forth method steps in which profiles are defined, e.g., "defining one or more profiles . . . ". The profiles are defined for the logical entity representing the network element feature. In the example shown in Fig. 3, the network element feature represented is optical card failures.

In another method step, the above-defined characteristics are assigned a specific value. For example (referring to table 300), a profile assigns specific values to card failure characteristics. Depending upon the case, the characteristic "card failure" may be assigned a specific value of either "0", "1" or

“2” (these are not limited). As the Examiner will note, the steps of “defining” are not the same as the step of “assigning”. Further, the Examiner will note that the assigned values are not arbitrary. Rather, they are specific. In other words, there is no doubt (referring to table 300) that the specific value “0” is assigned to the characteristic “card mismatch” when a card mismatch is critical (CR). Such specificity is not found in Palmer. If the Examiner believes otherwise, Applicants request that the Examiner provide specific examples of these specific values.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,295,139 to Palmer. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

A complete discussion of the Examiner's rejection is set forth in the Office Action, and is not being repeated here.

Independent claim 1 has been amended to recite a combination of steps in a method of identifying and managing network elements in a communication system, the method including defining one or more profiles for the logical entity representing the network element feature, wherein each profile assigns a specific value to each characteristic of the logical entity.

Independent claim 11 has been amended to recite a combination of elements in network node for use in a communication network, the network node including means for defining one or more profiles for the logical entity

representing the network node, wherein each profile assigns a specific value to each characteristic of the logical entity.

Applicants respectfully submit that these combination of steps and elements as set forth in independent claims 1 and 11 respectively, are not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Palmer.

The Office Action appears to focus on features which may be disclosed, but nevertheless, are not the focus of the Applicants' arguments of the claims. For example the Office Action focuses on features such as "assigning a value to a profile", "assigning a value to a physical object" and "assigning a value to a bridge". In this regard, the Office Action states "as physical attributes represent the logical object's attributes or characteristics, the profile is assigned a specific value" (see page 2 of the Office Action). The Office Action further states that "the physical object is assigned specific values for each attribute or characteristic representing the actual physical object" (see page 2 of the Office Action) and "thus a specific bridge representing a profile would be assigned specific values representing the bridge type, bridge ID, service, state and alarm state" (see page 3 of the Office Action-top of page).

Conspicuously absent from the above quoted portions of the outstanding Office Action is any mention of assigning a specific value to each characteristic. If the Examiner has another view, it is again requested that the Examiner name

the characteristic and also name the specific value assigned to the characteristic named.

Therefore, for the reasons explained above, Applicants again respectfully submit that the combination of elements as set forth in independent claims 1 and 11 are not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Palmer. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Dependent Claims

With regard to dependent claims 2-10 and 12-22, Applicants submit that claims 2-12 and 12-22 depend, either directly or indirectly, from independent claims 1 and 11, respectively, which are allowable for the reasons set forth above, and therefore claims 2-10 and 12-22 are allowable based on their dependence from claims 1 and 11. Reconsideration and allowance thereof are respectfully requested.

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CONCLUSION

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone Percy L. Square, Registration No. 51,084, at (703) 205-8034, in the Washington, D.C. area.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

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If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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